MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA RECOVERY EXCAVATIONS AT 38CH1466 AND 38CH1477, SEASIDE PLANTATION, CHARLESTON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

Prepared By:
Michael Trinkley, Ph.D.

Prepared For:
Mr. Walt Martin
Centex Homes
2430 Mall Drive, Suite 450
North Charleston, SC 29406

CHICORA RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 267

Chicora Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 8664
Columbia, SC 29202-8664
803/787-6910
Email: chicora@bellsouth.net
www.chicora.org

March 15, 1999

This report is printed on permanent paper ∞

ABSTRACT

This report provides preliminary data on excavations at 38CH1466, initially thought to primarily represent a Middle Woodland shell midden, and 38CH1477, a late eighteenth and early nineteenth century slave settlement. Both are situated on Seaside Plantation, in what historically has been known as Christ Church Parish, Charleston County, South Carolina. The investigations were conducted by Chicora Foundation during February and early March 1999 for Centex Homes of North Charleston. This work was proposed, and approved, under a Memorandum of Agreement with the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resources Management (OCRM).

These sites were initially recorded and assessed by Chicora's survey of the project area in 1993. The excavation of shovel tests and a series of 4-foot units revealed moderate quantities of prehistoric sherds and localized midden at 38CH1466, while at 38CH1477 a large quantity of historic materials, primarily ceramics, were recovered. The first site, 38CH1466, was thought to represent a Middle Woodland shell midden which was capable of addressing research questions focused on settlement and subsistence. Of particular interest was a small quantity of limestone tempered pottery. The second site, 38CH1477, was thought to represent a slave settlement with a mean ceramic date of 1809.

Since the initial survey and associated data recovery plans, both sites have gone from open, sparsely wooded old agricultural fields into pine thickets. Moreover, a portion of 38CH1477 had been impacted by construction staging.

As a result, the proposed methodology of discing and surface survey to identify concentrations was found to be inappropriate as both sites. Auger survey at 25 to 50 foot intervals was substituted instead. Likewise, an effort to use heavy equipment to strip the site at the conclusion of the field investigations was not implemented. The time was spent conducting further hand excavations.Finally, we broadened our search of 38CH1477 in order to identify a second concentration, outside the staging area, suitable for investigation. This allowed density mapping of shell and artifacts at the two sites. This, in turn, helped determine the location of block excavations.

The subsequent hand excavation included 550 square feet at 38CH1466 and 1,200 square feet at 38CH1477 over the five week field project. This included a single large block at 38CH1477, thought to represent a structure location based on the density and distribution of brick coupled with the recovered artifacts. It also included, as specified by the data recovery plan, two non-midden areas with dense artifacts (accounting for 350 square feet) and one dense midden area (accounting for 200 square feet) at 38CH1466.

Although the prehistoric site, 38CH1466, did yield relatively dense prehistoric remains, the site was perhaps more significant for the recovery of both historic artifacts and also a portion of a wall trench structure (Feature 1). It appears that the prehistoric portions have been far more heavily impacted by the plantation settlement than originally thought. A second feature (Feature 4) at the site also yielded historic remains. The other two, shallow shell-filled basins, may represent either prehistoric or historic features.

Site 38CH1477, while producing a excellent assemblage of historic remains, as well as a significant faunal assemblage, failed to reveal features (one post hole, was identified). Nevertheless, the density of artifacts and brick suggests a probable structure at this location.

Although the prehistoric occupation is far less than hoped for, the recovery of additional historic remains, including the wall trench structure, are significant finds. The focus of analysis will therefore be on the slave-related remains and how they fit into this plantation settlement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

Project Background

Sites 38CH1466 and 38CH1477 were initially reported in 1993 by Chicora's intensive study at Seaside Plantation (Adams and Trinkley 1993). The sites were found between a large, late twentieth century impoundment for waterfowl and the marsh edge, with a ditch and dike system probably dating to at least the nineteenth century. The sites were situated about 2 miles northeast of Mount Pleasant, just south of US 17 (Figure 1).

Of the 18 archaeological sites identified during that survey, five (38CH1466, 38CH1471, 38CH1473, 38CH1474, and 38CH1477) were recommended as eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The S.C. State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with these recommendations, with one additional site, 38CH1475, being identified by the SHPO as potentially eligible.

Eventually a portion of the property containing 38CH1473 (the John Whitesides slave settlement), was subdivided off and sold to the Lutheran Homes of South Carolina. Consequently, this site was not covered in a Memorandum of Agreement between the SHPO, the Coastal Council (now OCRM), and The Beach Company. In 1996 data recovery excavations were undertaken by Chicora Foundation at the location of John Whitesides main settlement (38CH1471) (Trinkley and Hacker 1996).

Subsequently, we discovered that the Lutheran Home had effectively destroyed 38CH1473, the John Whitesides slave settlement, through construction activities, although a small portion of another site, identified as 38CH1563, was discovered partially intact. Brockington and Associates eventually conducted some investigations at this second site (McMakin et al. 1997), perhaps representing one of the earliest of the Whitesides settlements. No additional work was conducted at 38CH1473.

This left only three eligible sites (38CH1466, 38CH1474, and 38CH1477) and one potentially eligible site (38CH1475) covered by the MOA.

Chicora Foundation was contacted by Centex Homes as early as 1996 to develop a data recovery plan for 38CH1466 and 38CH1477, situated on a portion of the property they anticipated purchasing from The Beach Company.

Site 38CH1466 is a large diffuse prehistoric site situated south of a large man-made pond and 38CH1477 is a small historic settlement, representing the slave settlement of Moses Whitesides, the brother of John Whitesides. Both are anticipated to be impacted by proposed house construction and preservation in place is not a viable option. The data recovery plan was approved by Centex Homes in early November 1998 and was submitted to the SHPO, being approved on December 1, 1999 (letter from Ms. Valerie Marcil, SHPO Archaeologist).

Investigations began at the two sites on February 1, 1999 and a total of 934.5 person hours were devoted to field investigations over six weeks. An additional 22.5 hours of field lab time was devoted to the project during rain periods.

Identified Sites

Site **38CH1466** was initially reported to consist of shell and artifacts distributed over an area measuring about 250 feet north-south by about 600 feet east-west. The site was tested by a series of 36 shovel tests and two 4-foot units. Combined, the work recovered 252 prehistoric sherds, one orthoquartzite

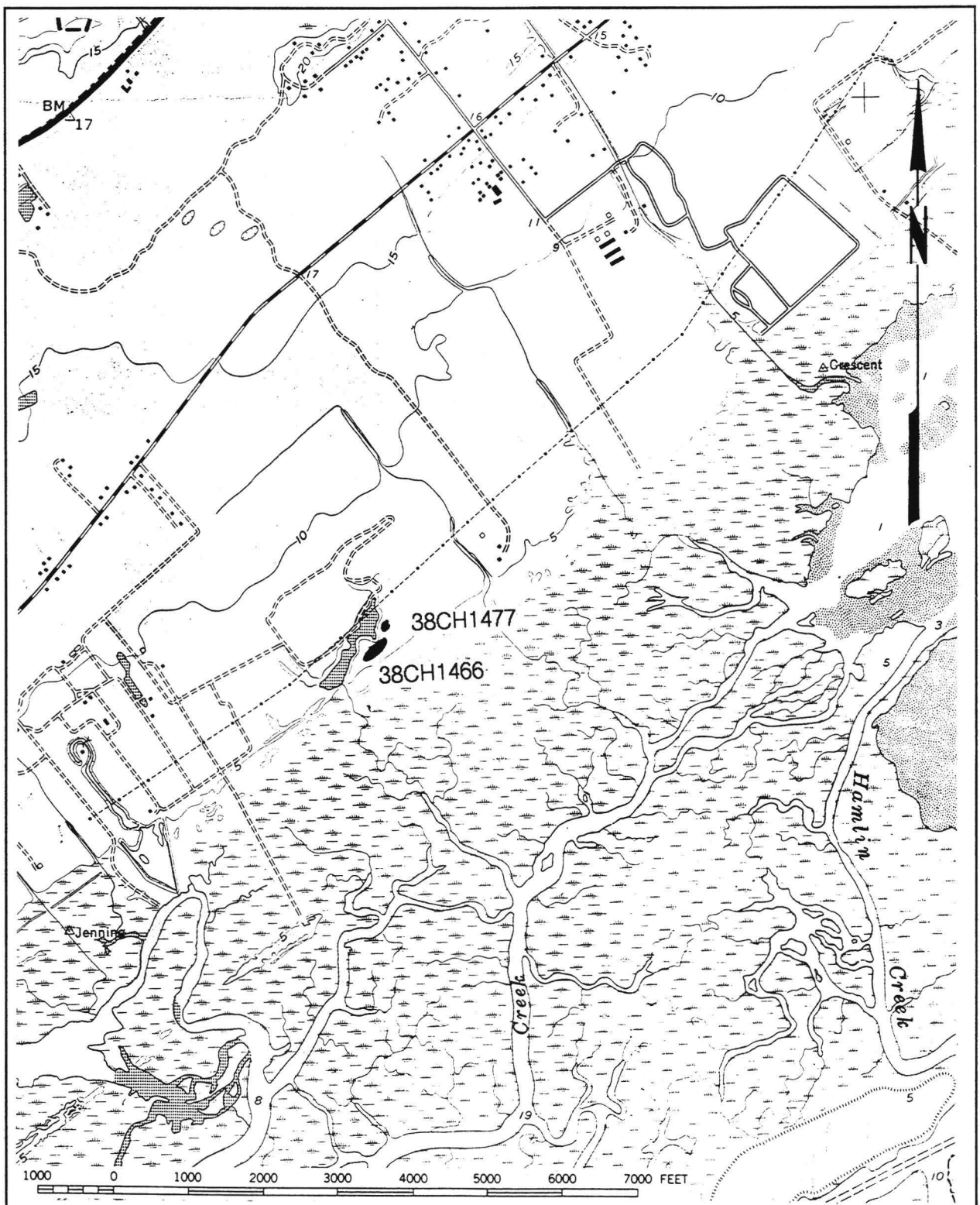

Figure 1. Location of 38CH1466 and 38CH1477 on the Fort Moultrie 7.5' USGS topographic map.

chunk, one fragment of daub, nine animal bone fragments, and 10 historic artifacts (which were thought to be likely associated with the nearby Moses Whitesides slave settlement, 38CH1477).

The excavations revealed about 0.7 foot of black sand mixed with varying amounts of shell overlying a brown sand subsoil. A third of the shovel tests produced artifacts, while both of the test units were positive (the one closer to the dirt road in an area of dense surface shell producing far more than the unit adjacent to the marsh berm.

The artifacts recovered in the testing included primarily Deptford wares (accounting for 69% of the specimens larger than an inch), followed by Hanover (18.4%), Santee-McClellanville (8%) and a very small quantity of an unusual ware exhibiting what appears to be limestone temper. In addition to the faunal material, ethnobotanical remains were also recovered from waterscreening a small portion of the sample.

The site was recommended eligible based on the limited information concerning Deptford sites, the presence of the limestone tempered ware, as well as the presence of faunal and ethnobotanical remains. In other words, there were a variety of data sets present at the site and it was thought that additional research had the potential to yield significant information concerning subsistence strategies for the Middle Woodland. In particular there was an interest in exploring any perceptible difference in Deptford and Hanover strategies. Moreover, we recommended that an effort be made to evaluate intra-site spatial patterning by focusing on both midden and non-midden areas.

In retrospect, there was concern over the amount of the site which has not been plowed. Although the midden was heavy and the data sets were extensive, it began to appear that much, perhaps all, of this site has been plowed.[1] We are not, however, convinced that this precludes the recovery of intra-site data. In fact, the heavily plowed prehistoric site on Seabrook Island (38CH1257; see Trinkley 1998) produced not only features, but also evidence of at least one structure.

Site **38CH1477** was found to consist of a fairly small, tightly clustered concentration of historic materials just to the north of 38CH1466, again on the edge of the man-made pond. At the time of the original survey a portion of the site had been disced (the remainder was in underbrush adjacent to the pond), allowing excellent surface visibility. In this area a large surface collection was made. A series of 46 shovel tests were excavated at the site, with 17% yielding artifacts (a relatively low percentage, suggesting that any architectural remains at the site may be ephemeral). The site was estimated to cover an area measuring about 200 feet in diameter.

In an effort to explore the disparity between the extensive quantity of surface material and the low density of remains in the shovel tests, two 4-foot units were also excavated at this site. Both were situated in the central core of the site and both found about 0.5 foot of very dark grayish brown Ap soil overlying a grayish brown subsoil. Test Pit 2 revealed a large, shallow pit feature, indicating that in spite of plowing at least some features were still present.

The artifacts collected from the site span the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition, a small quantity of animal bone was also identified, as well as some colonoware — a low fired earthenware made by African-American slaves. The mean ceramic date for the collection was about 1809. This corresponds well with the historic data which suggests that the slave row was built sometime between 1762, when Thomas Whitesides willed the property to his son Moses, and 1798, when Joseph Percell made a plat showing the division of lands between Moses and his brother John. This date is similar to the main house date of 1803 (this site was destroyed by the Isle of Palms Connector, but a collection is available).[2] An 1856 plat continues to illustrate this slave settlement, suggesting that it

[1] For example, the 1919 edition of the Fort Moultrie USGS topographic map reveals that both sites are situated in a plowed field.

[2] The date is only slightly later than that of 1779, obtained for the main John Whitesides settlement (Trinkley and Hacker 1996:56).

lasted until at least the Civil War.

The collection also revealed the dominance of kitchen artifacts. While this may represent a bias caused by the large surface collection, it may also reflect a very low architectural assemblage, common to eighteenth century slave settlement (and perhaps to some slave sites well into the nineteenth century).

The site was recommended eligible not only because the data sets indicated a range of materials (ceramics, glass, pipe stems, gun flints, beads, buttons, and faunal remains) were present, but also because the site produced an intact feature. A range of questions were posed for the site, including the investigation of potential architectural remains and an investigation of slave dietary patterns. But the single question of greatest interest was how slaves of a small owner might have lived in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. This would have been a time when many slave holders were implementing reforms. Would the "masters of small worlds" have implemented similar reforms?

Research Orientation

These two sites present radically different research topics. At 38CH1466 we anticipated that the research would center around the prehistoric occupation, while at 38CH1466 research would be focused on the slaves of a small landowner at the turn of the century.

38CH1466

The research previously proposed for this site focused on rather standard questions of chronology, typology, and environmental setting. While these remain important, we believed that the work proposed for the site should be adjusted to take into account even more recent research.

For example, at 38BU861 research focused on intrasite patterning, midden component research, artifact analyses, and exploration of ecofacts. In the summary we comment that:

> the study at Old House Creek suggests there is still information which can be wrung from shell middens. Larger numbers of pollen samples may yield greater information on site environs and their changes. Use of water screening may provide heretofore unavailable information on the diversity of faunal remains. Use of fabric and paste analysis may help us understand intrasite community patterning. The presence of small potsherds may help us to understand pedestrian traffic and the site formation process (Trinkley and Adams 1994:120).

At 38CH1219 a somewhat different approach was used, since there appeared to be only one midden, rather the number of different middens known to be present at Old House. Consequently a very close interval auger survey was used to obtain information on artifact density, shell density, and below grade midden deposits. This almost immediately revealed the complexity of the site, helping to identify at least three discrete middens. This was further refined through the hand excavation of a 20 foot block and the collection of very large samples of data from the three middens. This allowed extraordinary data collection for the individual middens and the site as a whole. Tools, other than pottery are limited. But this site again produced both Deptford and St. Catherines sherds in association with one another. Very detailed analyses of the prehistoric diet were conducted, with biomass calculations carefully conducted for both vertebrate and non-vertebrate remains. Of considerable interest, while the site revealed low diversity, there was evidence of high equitability, with a number of different resources, from a number of different environmental zones, incorporated into the prehistoric diet. The study of the Kiawah midden concludes:

> The site is, however, different in many respects from larger sites like 38BU861. Whether this different is simply one of scale (i.e., this location on Kiawah was not visited as often) or of social complexity (i.e., the 38BU861 site may represent a base

> camp from which smaller family or extended family units dispersed) is not yet understood. The investigations at 38CH1219, however, illustrate the purpose and importance of continuing a broad range of studies at coastal shell middens, *as long as the questions and techniques continue to be refined and perfected* (Trinkley et al. 1995:70).

Very recent research at 38CH1257, a prehistoric site on Seabrook Island just southwest of Kiawah, found few artifacts were present on the surface and even excavation revealed relatively small assemblages that had been heavily plowed. However, when the site was mechanically stripped, a number of features became visible, including at least one structure. In addition, the features found at this site were far different from those found at other small shell midden sites. Although this leaves us with more questions than answers, it does point out that, when conditions are appropriate, and formal excavation has been completed, mechanical stripping may provide a different perspective of the site.

We initially felt that the site at Seaside Plantation had two important features in common with the Seabrook site — both had been plowed and (as a result) both were free of trees and therefore suited to mechanical stripping. As a result, we suggested a somewhat similar research strategy.

We believed that additional formal excavations at 38CH1477 were appropriate, if to only better document the nature of the prehistoric assemblage. We also anticipate that these excavations will be designed to maximize the recovery of faunal remains through water screening. In addition, we anticipated using techniques that would refine and perfect previous efforts, in an effort to see if previous results can be replicated at a range of similar sites. Afterwards, we sought to focus on the stripping of portions of the site area in order to expose and plot any features that might be present.

We discovered, however, that the site was no longer open. Instead, over the past six years the site had grown into a fairly dense pine thicket, making any sort of mechanical stripping problematical. To further complicate the matter, Centex Homes was not building the houses on the property (and consequently conducting landscaping). Instead, they were selling the lots for the home owners to be responsible for construction. It would be very difficult to sell stripped lots. Finally, Centex Homes did not possess permits to allow for this level of land disturbance.

As a result, a letter was sent to the SHPO, on February 12, indicating a change in the data recovery plan was recommended.

38CH1477

At this site we were fortunate to have the previous experience of research at John Whitesides settlement (38CH1471; Trinkley and Hacker 1996). That work helped us to begin to understand the archaeological assemblage we might expect for small planters. In fact, the research revealed an assemblage dominated by kitchen items, a simple house, and a diet of pork and fish. The ceramics were largely plain or simply decorated and most of these were bowls, suggesting that the foodways were dominated by stews and one-pot meals.

Within this setting we felt it would be very informative to have the opportunity to explore what the slave settlement of such a small owner might look like. Making it even more significant is the loss of 38CH1473, which would have provided an exceptional basis of comparison.

Just as our view of planters is largely developed from historical sources that focus on the wealthy and elite, we believe that our understanding of African American slaves is dominated by a similar pre-occupation with those of larger planters. The investigations at the Moses Whitesides settlement would provide a unique opportunity to examine a small slave settlement and better understand the lives of the vast majority of Carolina slaves.

Our research focus was anticipated to be very similar to that previously outlined in the John Whitesides study. In addition, we hoped to identify evidence of structural remains.

We again thought that the open fields would promote this aspect of the research. In addition, we anticipated that it will be possible to further increase our typological exploration of colonoware pottery, complementing research already completed at John Whitesides plantation and Broom Hall Plantation, and ongoing at Crowfield Plantation and Crawl Plantation.

Like at 38CH1466, we discovered that the site was no longer suitable for stripping. More significantly, we found at the original portion of the site investigated in 1993 had been impacted by its use as a construction staging area. Fortunately, our auger survey identified a second dense site area and our investigations shifted to this portion of the site. It is regrettable, however, that the initial area — with a known mean ceramic date and comparative assemblage — has been lost to this current research.

EXCAVATIONS

Methodology

Field Methods

The initial survey of these two sites included only shovel testing, typically at intervals ranging from 50 to 100 foot intervals, although in a few cases the interval was as close as 25 feet. As a result, we felt that discing the two sites, establishing survey collection grids, and conducting a surface collection would provide expedient information on artifact density and the distribution of the sites' components. However, as previously discussed, the sites had significantly grown up over the six years between the initial survey and the data recovery excavations.

As a result, we opted for more consistent, closer interval auger testing at each site, covering an area sufficient to encompass the originally identified sites. Auger testing was selected over shovel testing because our experience suggests that auger testing provides more consistent results with less damage to recovered artifacts. Prior to our work we arranged for the sites to be bush hogged in order to provide access.

Establishing site boundaries for both the bush hogging and the auger testing, however, proved difficult. In a few areas there was a occasional scatter of shell. Likewise, at 38CH1477 we found several brick fragments on the surface. In general, however, the ground visibility was very poor and there was no clear evidence of either site. Moreover, it appeared that a sizable portion of 38CH1477 had been covered over by a construction staging area.

We felt that any effort at reconstructing site locations based on the original survey would likely yield questionable results, so rather than clear two distinct areas, establish two different grids, and conduct two separate auger surveys, we selected to open one large area, establish the grid covering what we felt would be adequate acreage for both sites, and auger test the entire area.

Even this, however, proved difficult. We had an area 900 feet northeast-southwest paralleling the dirt access road, or about 4.5 acres, bush hogged. Once opened, we found no additional clues to the location of the two sites. Consequently, a grid baseline was laid out bisecting the open tract, from the perceived southern limit of the site following a magnetic orientation of 58°30' for 700 feet. This allowed the ability to expand grid south or north, depending on the circumstances (Figure 2).

In order to establish horizontal control for the auger survey (as well as the following block excavations), a modified Chicago grid was established over the site area. The initial southwest corner was designed 250R450. With this system the first number indicates feet north of a datum (0R0), while the second number indicates feet right (or east) of the data. Therefore, 100R200 would be located 100 feet north and 200 feet east (or right) of the datum. Individual squares are designed by their southeast corner.

The established grid covered the area from N250 to N950 and bordering the access road from about R250 in the northern part of the site to R600. The site datum was established at 500R500, where a length of rebar, with an aluminum cap, was driven flush to the ground. The grid was also tied into a development datum on a double oak tree at the south edge of the site. This last datum was also used to provide vertical control at the site, being assigned an assumed elevation of 10.00 feet above mean sea level (AMSL).

Auger testing at the Fish Haul site on Hilton Head Island (Trinkley et al. 1986:1181-119) had used 50-foot intervals to great success, although the site area being covered there was 15 acres. We decided to conduct

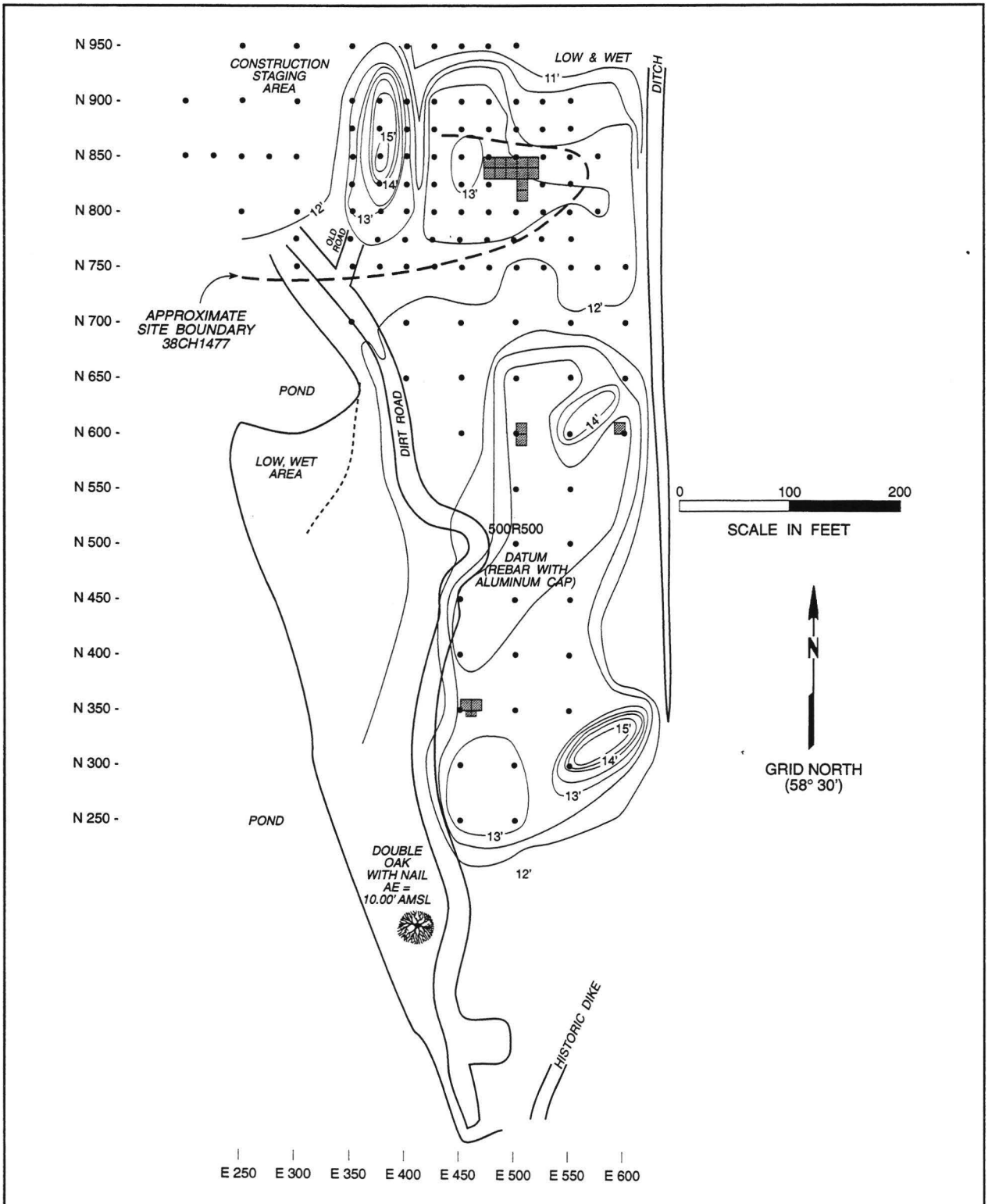

Figure 2. Topographic map of 38CH1466 and 38CH1477.

the additional testing of the prehistoric site (38CH1466) at the 50-foot interval, but to reduce the interval to 25-feet in the vicinity of where we anticipated the historic site (38CH1477) to be located. This would provide some degree of economics to the investigation of the prehistoric site, while providing data for the historic site which was data far superior to Fish Haul, better than the shovel testing, but still within the scheme of the current project.

This resulted in the excavation of 33 auger tests in the prehistoric site. Many of these were found to be very wet, both because of recent rain and also because of the low elevation. A total of 36 auger tests were initially placed at 50-foot intervals, with an additional 52 auger tests placed to fill in the grid, providing 25-foot coverage in the central area. All tests were screened using ¼-inch mesh. While all artifacts were collected, both shell and brick was weighed in the field, noted, and discarded. The resulting artifact and shell weight data was used to produce density maps which were then used to help guide additional research at the two sites.

Elevations were also collected from each auger test point in order to create the site plan (Figure 2). This data suggests considerable alteration of the topography in this vicinity. There is the ditch bordering the marsh edge — the result of an eighteenth century ditch and dike system designed to hold back high tides that damaged agricultural lands. Several of the resulting excess spoil piles (or perhaps clean-up piles) are seen inland from the ditch. Today the accompanying ditch system terminates at about N300, although the dike itself continues along the property edge.

There is also another very large spoil pile at the northwestern site edge, which we believe is the result of twentieth century activities associated with the creation of a freshwater pond to the west. This pond was created following pre-existing nineteenth century drainage ditches, probably associated with the agricultural fields.

Although the remainder of the site area appears to be flat, reference to Figure 2 reveals that there are actually two small "islands" of higher ground, one toward the north in the vicinity of what has been identified as 38CH1477, and the other to the south, at what we have called 38CH1466. The difference in elevation is typically only a half of a foot, but this is sufficient to vastly improve the drainage of these two "islands." It may also be significant that the bulk of the cultural remains are associated with one of the two higher sand ridge. Although never clearly visible by eye alone, a similar correlation between prehistoric shell middens and sand ridges with 0.5 foot difference in elevation has been observed at several coastal shell middens.

Excavation proceeded by hand with all soil either mechanically screened through ¼-inch mesh or water screened through ¼ or 1/8-inch mesh. At both sites we anticipated water screening if water was available. As it turned out, our water source was tidal, and was therefore periodically available. This allowed about 50% of the soil from 38CH1466 and about 33% of the soil from 38CH1477 to be water screened through 1/8-inch mesh. In order to maintain productivity, the remainder was mechanically screened through ¼-inch screen. Finer dry screening was not possible since the soil never dried out sufficiently.

Screen loads were sorted in the field, with all materials from a single provenience bagged together. Shell and brick were quantified by weight in the field and discarded. Munsell soil color notations were made during the course of excavations, typically on moist freshly exposed soils.

A one-quart soil samples were retained from each provenience. Some colleagues retain much smaller samples (often no larger than an ounce), in order to minimize the size of the collection for curation. Such small samples severely restrict the types of future analyses possible. Since we anticipated that some of the samples would be used in the pollen and phytolith studies, as well as for geological analysis, larger samples were clearly necessary. Shell samples were occasionally retained to document specified materials, but were not collected in any routine fashion.

Each unit which appeared to contain shell midden (or remnant midden), also had a shell column measuring 2.2 feet square established in its southeast corner. The matrix from this column was first weighed and then screened through ¼-inch mesh. The resulting shell was then weighed, in order to calculate the density

of the midden. This is a standard approach that Chicora has used at a variety of middens. By continuing the practice we hope to accumulate a substantial data set that may help determine the normal variation by cultural association.

Afterwards the shell from the column was separated by species and quantified by weight. This allows us to evaluate the contributions of different species and to integrate the shellfish data into the zooarchaeological study as biomass.

Units were troweled and photographed using black and white negative and color transparency film, typically at the base of the plowzone and the base of the excavations. Each unit was drawn at a scale of 1 inch to 2 feet. Features were designed by consecutive numbers. Post holes were consecutively numbered by specific unit.

Feature fill was water screened through 1/8-inch mesh and features, upon completion of their excavation, were also photographed using black and white negative film and color transparencies. One quart soil samples were obtained from all features. In addition, approximately 5 to 10 gallons of soil from each feature was retained for off-site water flotation.

At the conclusion of the work the excavations were covered in plastic and Centex Homes was notified that backfilling could be conducted at their convenience.

Laboratory Processing and Analysis

Processing was begun in the field, but was completed at Chicora's labs in Columbia. During this washing artifacts were sorted by broad categories — pottery, lithics, bone, ceramics, glass, iron, and other materials. Upon drying the artifacts were temporarily bagged by these categories, pending cataloging.

Cataloging has not yet begun, but will follow the system employed by the S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, where we anticipate that the collection and the associated field records will be curated. This institution has been selected since all of the earlier survey materials are housed there. All original field records will be provided on pH neutral, alkaline buffered paper. Black and white photographic materials have been processed to archival permanence. Color slides, while not considered archivally stable, consist of Fujichrome material, which has the highest degree of permanence next to Kodachrome (which is increasingly difficult to have appropriately processed).

Zooarchaeological materials have been sorted out for analysis. As discussed below, we have not identified any carbonized material with good contexts for radiocarbon dating, but we have not yet floated the feature fill (which is currently drying). Once these samples are floated and the content of the features is examined, some datable material may present itself.

Results of the Excavations

Auger Testing

Figure 3 reveals the artifact density map for the two site areas. The lower two concentrations both reflect primarily prehistoric remains and reflect the posited location of 38CH1466. Perhaps the densest concentration appears to be at 600R500, in relatively close proximity to the access road. A second concentration is situated in the vicinity of 600R600, while a third is at 500R500, ranging to the northeast. The southern-most concentration is rather ephemeral, never exceeding 3 sherds per auger test.

The series of concentrations to the north, including one large area and five smaller clusters, occur in the area of what has been identified as 38CH1477 and consist primarily of historic remains. Although one clear concentration was found at 850R475, most of this concentration contains no more than 1 or 2 items per test — suggesting a very sparse occupation.

The original survey, of course, suggested that the historic site was concentrated further to the west, where today there is a construction staging area, and failed to clearly identify the more eastwardly concentration. This current study presents a more complex picture, suggesting that there may have been a linear arrangement of structures, with the pond having destroyed several, the construction staging area and road perhaps removing several more, and the current auger study identifying the far eastern portion of the settlement. This would be consistent with the historic

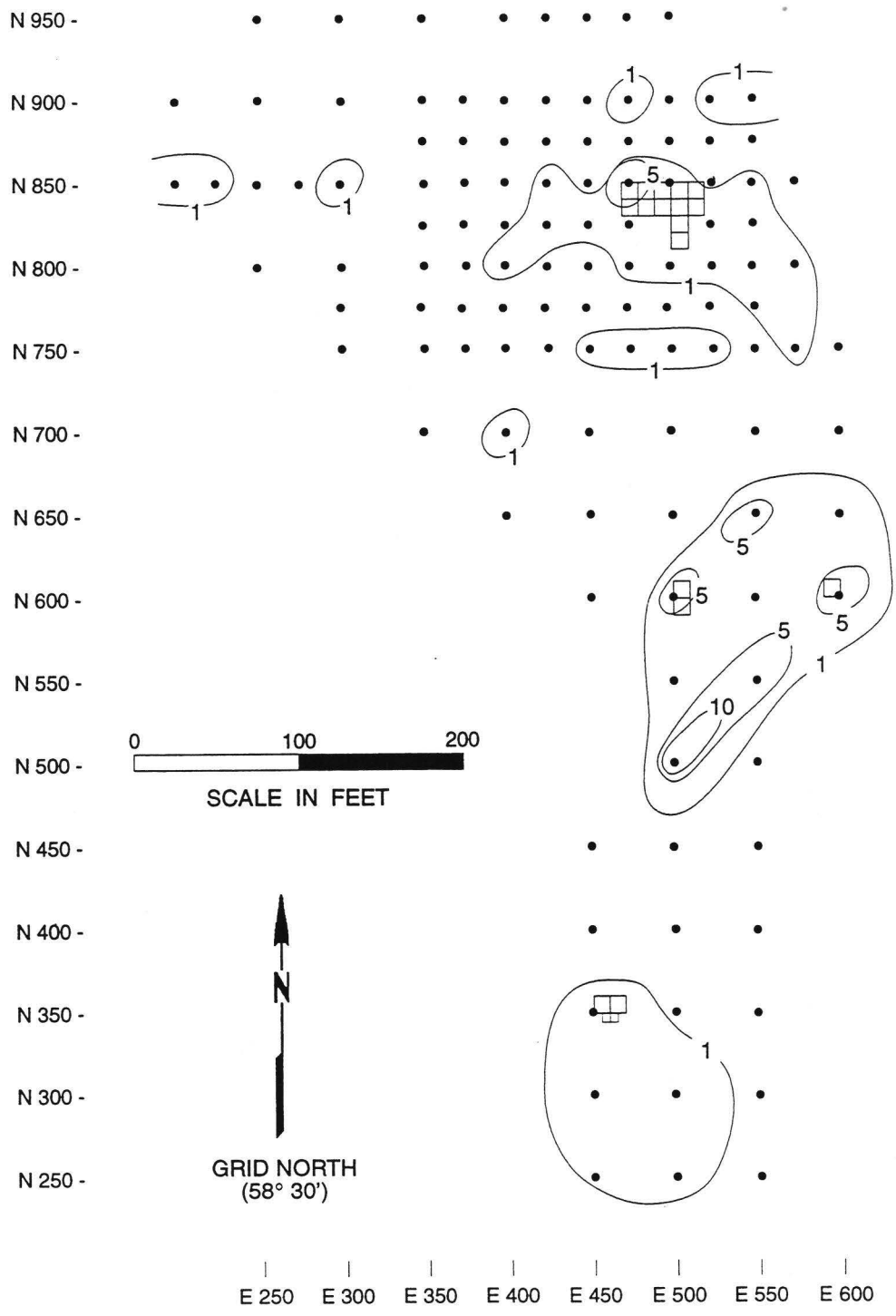

Figure 3. Artifact density at 38CH1466 and 38CH1477 based on the auger survey.

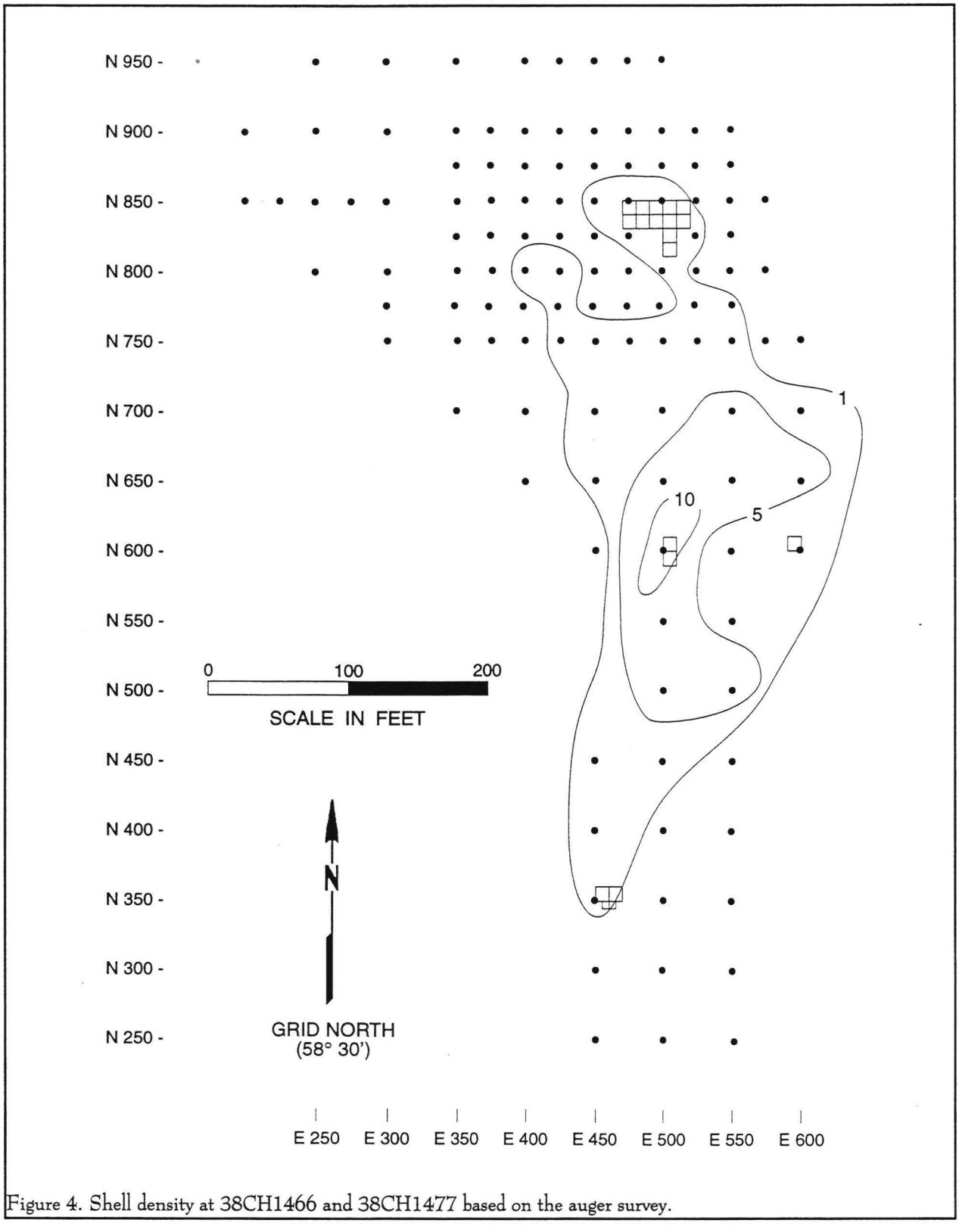

Figure 4. Shell density at 38CH1466 and 38CH1477 based on the auger survey.

evidence that reveals a slave settlement at this site.

Although the distribution of artifacts appears to clearly reveal two sites, Figure 4, illustrating the distribution of shell, does not. Instead there is a rather broad smear which seems to parallel the marsh front. The densest shell is found in the immediate vicinity of 600R500, where levels of about 10 to 13 pounds per auger test (approximately 1.2 ft^3).

There is no clear evidence of individual middens. Instead it appears that one (or more) middens have been blurred or blended together by years of plowing, creating the one smear we see today.

The auger study also provided information on the vertical distribution of materials. Neither prehistoric nor historic materials were found more deeply buried than about 1.1 foot. In even the better drained areas soils tended to be damp, evidence chemical reduction, and exhibit dark A and B horizons. All of the materials identified came from the A horizon. Although plowing was not identified on the basis of plow scars, the degree of homogenization, coupled with the size of artifacts present, suggests that the entire area has been uniformly plowed for a great many years.

Excavations at 38CH1466

As stipulated by the research plan, a series of three blocks were excavated at 38CH1466 — two in non-shell areas and one where there was a concentration of shell midden, based on the auger study.

590-600R510, Shell Midden Area

The one shell midden excavation consisted of two 10-foot units, 590-600R510, placed on the basis of the dense shell remains found in the auger study. These excavations revealed 0.8 to 1.2 foot of very dark gray (10YR3/1) loam mixed with dense shell overlying a predominantly dark brown (10YR3/3) sand subsoil (Figure 5).

The combined weight of shell from these two units was 2,721 pounds. One shell columns from each unit was removed and quantified. From 590R510 we identified a midden with a shell:soil ratio of 1:2.9, while 600R510 yielded a shell:soil ratio of 1:2.7. Oyster was the dominant species in both, ranging from 43.0% to 61.5% by weight. Small shell fragments, not easily classified to species and perhaps indicative of the amount of plowing, was the next most common classification. Not unexpectedly the variation here is much smaller, ranging from 25.2 to 29.3% by weight. It is likely that much of this small debris is actually oyster.

The remainder of the shellfish species may perhaps represent individual meals or collection episodes and it's important is variable not only by unit, but also by location within each unit. Clam varied from only a trace in 600R510 to 7.1% in 590R510. On the other hand, periwinkle accounts for 31.5% of the midden by weight in 600R510, but only 1.4% in the column sample of 590R510. Whelk ranged from 0.1 to 0.7%. Neither unit produced any identifiable quantity of ribbed mussel or stout tagelus.

The excavations produced not only a quantity of prehistoric pottery, but also a number of relatively large historic ceramics. This suggests that the shell midden may represent a discard area associated with a nearby structure.

At the base of these two units a single shell pit was identified, measuring about 1.5 foot in diameter. This feature consisted of a black (10YR2/1) sandy loam fill with abundant oyster. Upon excavation it revealed steeply sloping sides suggestive of a larger pit which had perhaps been truncated by plowing. The fill produced both prehistoric and historic remains, indicating that the pit was dug, and quickly filled, during the historic occupation of the site.

600R600, Non-Shell Midden Area

The first of the two non-shell midden areas was established at 600R600, based on the auger test data which suggested this vicinity to be a relatively high producer of artifacts associated with relatively little shell. Our excavations found only 222 pounds of shell, significantly less than at the previously discussed midden. Although no definitive (or observable in profile) midden was present, a column was still removed and quantified for comparative purposes. We found that the

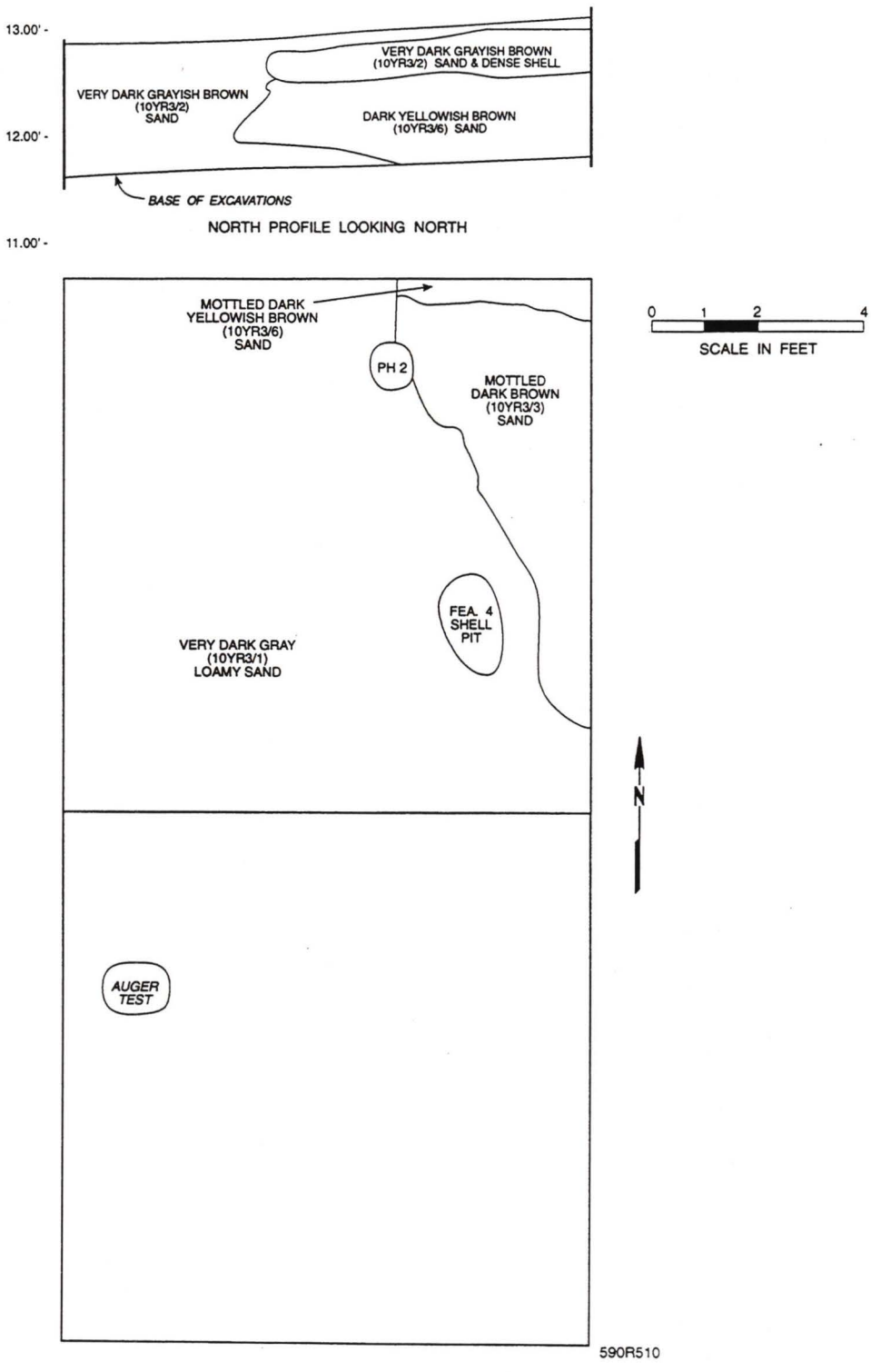

Figure 5. Plan and profile of excavations in 590-600R510 at 38CH1466.

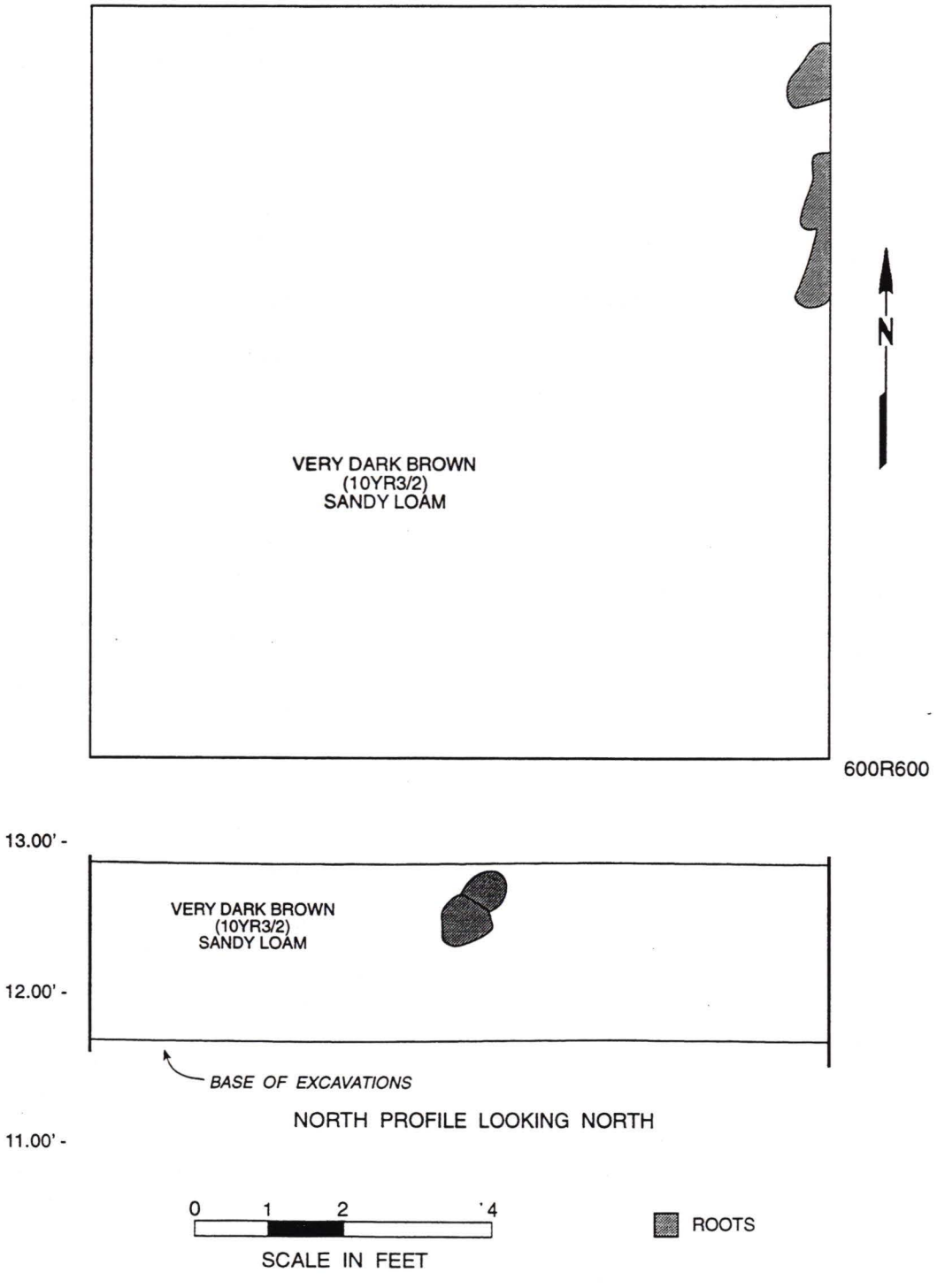

Figure 6. Plan and profile of excavations in 600R600 at 38CH1466.

shell:soil ratio is 1:9.6, also clearly distinct. Nevertheless, oyster is still dominant (accounting for 50.6% of the sample, followed by small fragments, periwinkle, clam, and whelk).

The A (most likely Ap) horizon consisted of very dark gray (10YR3/1) sandy loam about 1.2 feet in depth, overlying a very dark brown (10YR3/2) sandy loam subsoil (Figure 6). Artifacts were again primarily prehistoric and this unit even produced a small lithic assemblage. In addition, however, we continued finding small quantities of historic materials (including 13.5 pounds of brick rubble).

Although artifacts were plentiful, the unit produced no features. As a result, no additional investigations were conducted in this area.

345R460-465, 350R460-470, Non-Shell Midden Area

The second of the two non-shell midden areas was consisted of two 10-foot and two 5-foot units, again based on the auger test data which suggested this vicinity to be a relatively high producer of artifacts associated with relatively little shell. Our excavations, which opened 250 ft^2, revealed only a trace of brick, although 581 pounds of shell were recovered. Shell columns in the two 10-foot units (again taken for purely comparative purposes, even though no midden was present), reveal shell:soil ratios of 1:105 — clearly revealing the small quantity of shell present in this particular site area (Figure 7).

The excavations reveals about 0.5 to 1.0 foot of very dark gray (10YR3/1) sandy loam Ap horizon soil overlying the subsoil of very dark grayish brown (10YR3/2) sand.

The units produced a number of tree stains, but more significantly a series of three features. Feature 1 represents a portion of a wall trench structure. The eastern wall is oriented approximately north-south and extends the 13-feet length from N350 south to about N347 where it disappears into another vague stain. Where visible, however, this portion of the wall ranged from 1.0 to 1.6 feet in width and consisted of a black (10YR2/1) sand fill with lumps of gray mortar. At 351.5R463 there is a T-intersection and a wall extends about 10-feet to the west, gradually disappearing in the subsoil staining. Again, this leg of the feature contains black soil with abundant lumps of mortar. Upon close inspection this mortar is largely sand, with a relatively small quantity of lime and small fragments of pulverized shell.

Feature 1, upon excavation, was found to be about 0.5 to 0.7 foot in depth. No post impressions are visible in the base of the trench, although there is some variation in depth is vaguely suggestive of posts. The mortar, however, is randomly dispersed in the fill and does not appear to be associated with any specific posts or areas. Artifacts included a number of prehistoric sherds, as well as a small assemblage of nails and colono ware ceramics.

It appears that this wall trench was excavated through a pre-existing prehistoric midden or occupation zone, resulting the mixture of materials.

Feature 2, a shell pit, was found in 350R460-470, bisected by the R460 wall. The pit was encountered at the base of Level 1 and measured about 2.3 feet north-south by 2.1 feet east-west. The fill consisted of black (10YR2/1) sandy loam with dense shell. Excavation and examination of this shell revealed that 92% consisted of oyster, with the remaining 8% consisting of clam fragments. The pit is very shallow, averaging between 0.2 and 0.4 foot in depth.

Although in close proximity to Feature 1, this pit produced only prehistoric materials. Although its temporal episode is questionable, it seems most likely that it dates from the prehistoric occupation of the site.

Feature 3 is situated southeast of Feature 1 in the southeast corner of unit 345R465. It, too, was encountered at the base of Level 1 and was identifiable by the darker fill (a very dark gray, 10YR3/1, compared to the subsoil in this area, a dark grayish brown, 10YR4/2). This fill tended to blend into Feature 1, and was largely distinguished by its greater density of shell and the absence of mortar inclusions.

Only the northwest quadrant of the feature was exposed by the excavations, so observations concerning

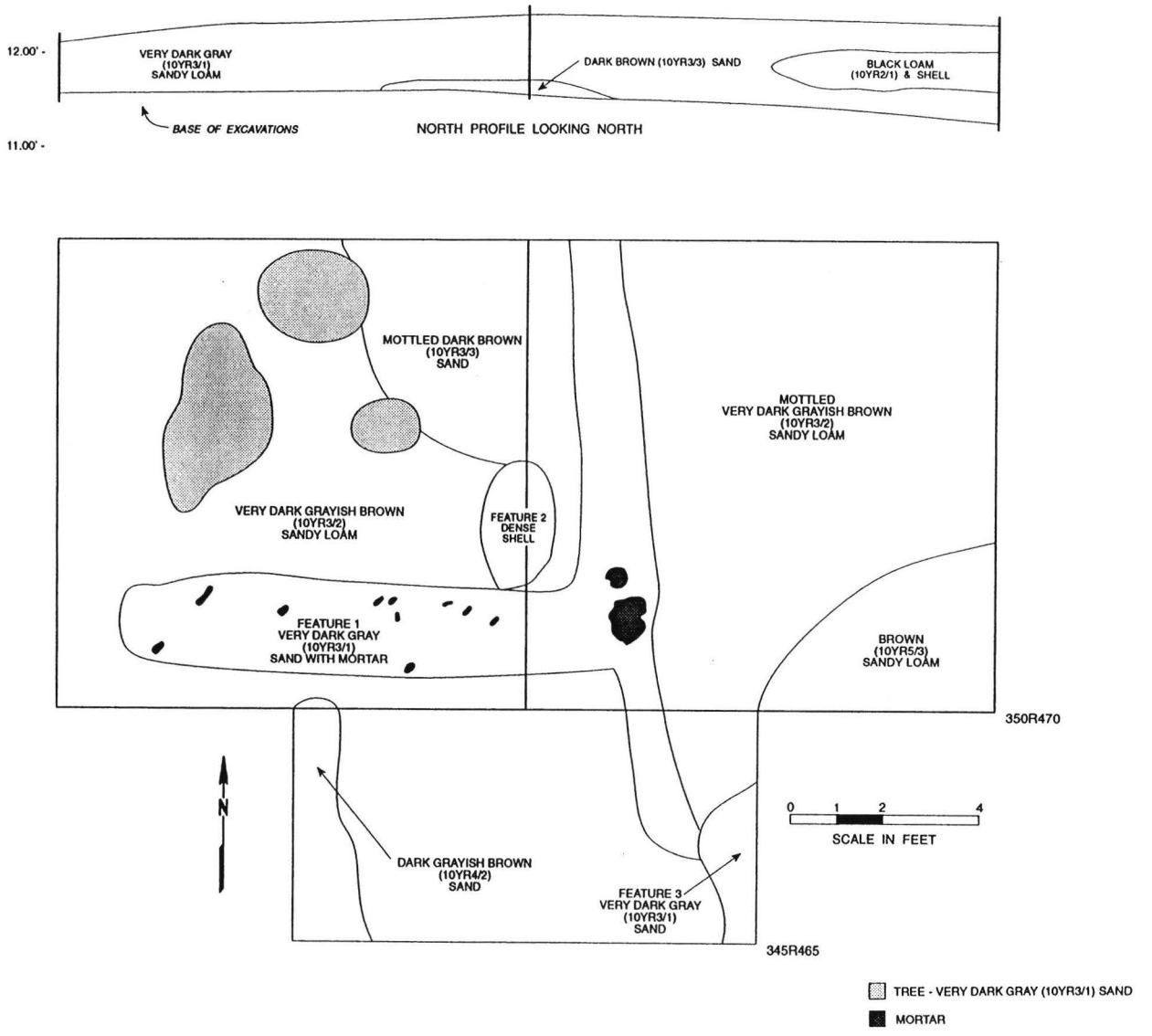

Figure 7. Plan and profile of excavations in 345R460-465 and 350R460-470 at 38CH1466.

Figure 8. Plan and profiles of excavations in 820-830R510, 840-850R470-520 at 38CH1477.

its size and shape are speculative. It may, however, represent a fairly large shell pit, perhaps 3 feet in length north-south by perhaps 2 or more feet in width, east-west. The portion excavated is gradually sloping to the south, although it has a steeply sloping west side.

The artifact assemblage of the feature was very sparse — three prehistoric sherds. Again, the proximity to the historic feature and the high density of historic materials in the unit aside, it is likely that this feature represents a moderate sized prehistoric shell pit.

Excavations at 38CH1477

Excavations at the historic site consist of a series of 12 10-foot units, forming a single block placed in the one area of densest historic materials (Figure 8). Although we were initially concerned about the likelihood of recovering "good" historic remains, these excavations produced a large assemblage which appears to date primarily from the first quarter of the nineteenth century — perhaps slightly later than the original survey would indicate.

The excavations include the units 820-830R510, 840-850R470-520. The east-west orientation developed as we traced out increasing brick and artifact densities, while the extension of the south was excavated in order to establish a southern limit on the artifact density. These excavations were, therefore, successful in almost completely exposing the core of the artifact concentration, likely centered about 840R490-500.

The units reveal a fairly consistent A or Ap horizon of black (10YR2/1) sandy loam ranging from 1.0 to 1.2 feet in depth overlying a heavily mottled dark gray (10YR3/1) loamy sand subsoil. These units failed to reveal any features. And, in fact, only a single post hole was identified (in 830R510). Although round with a slightly pointed base, the materials recovered suggest that this post was associated with the historic occupation.

Although no clear architectural remains were identified, the distribution of brick rubble does suggest the presence of structural remains. Brick density increases from amounts of 6 and 13 pounds in 840-850R470 respectively to 64 and 55 pounds in 850R510-520. The smear of brick to the east may be the result of plowing, or perhaps more likely (since elsewhere on the site the plow smearing seems to be oriented more north-south), the remnant of a brick chimney fall. In addition, our field examination of artifacts suggests that the quantity of nails was greatest in the central units, decreasing to the east and west — perhaps indicative of a generalized structure location.

Artifact density was greatest toward the east, in units 840R500-510, but began to once again fall as we continued the excavations southward into 820R510. It seems likely, therefore, that we managed to isolated the east, south, and west edges of this particular occupation area. Although time did not allow excavation to the north, a nearby low area precludes any extension more than about 20 feet.

SUMMARY

Research Questions

38CH1466

The research at this site focused on rather standard questions of chronology, typology, and environmental setting. To these were added some consideration of a broad range of additional issues, including intrasite patterning, and more detailed exploration of midden components.

Portions of our research at this site were predicated on our ability to strip portions after excavation. Since stripping was not possible, clearly those research issues require modification. Of even greater impact on our research strategy, however, has been the recovery of a broad range of historic materials at this supposedly prehistoric site.

During the initial survey only 10 of 232 artifacts, or about 4%, were historic specimens. Although untabulated at present, we believe that perhaps as much as 10% of the collection is associated with the historic occupation. And certainly one of the more complex features recovered — a portion of a wall trench structure — dates from the historic occupation. These findings make us more cautious in our interpretations. For example, can we associate all of the faunal remains with the prehistoric occupation?

As we progress through analysis, we'll make that, and other, decisions based on the findings. In other words, if we conduct the analysis of the faunal remains and few or none of the species are domesticates, then we will be more likely to present the assemblage as representative of the prehistoric occupation (especially if domesticates dominate the collection from the historic site, 38CH1477). On the other hand, if there are many domesticates we will likely be required to ignore the collection — significantly reducing what we are able to say about the prehistoric occupation at 38CH1466.

Our anticipation of finding clearly defined occupation areas, distinct from middens, does not appear to have been completely fulfilled. There seems to be relatively dense materials in all site areas and we can't, at this point, clearly distinguish occupation density between the shell midden and non-shell midden areas. This is most likely the result of plowing. Although we anticipated some plow disturbance, it appears that the site has been more heavily plowed than was revealed by the 1993 survey.

It appears that the site originally contained at least two, perhaps three, shell midden areas. Still relatively well defined are one excavated in 590-600R510 and another further toward the marsh (not picked up by the auger tests, but verified by field observation). A third is perhaps situated between these two. Regardless, these seem to have been blurred together by intensive plowing.

On the other hand, this is not to say that the site has failed to produce useful data. Most significantly there does appear to be a large ceramic assemblage, as well as lithics from at least one of the excavations. Both are amenable to traditional study.

In addition, the investigated midden has produced good information regarding midden density and shellfish species. These will provide important subsistence data, especially if we are able to incorporate the faunal remains.

In addition, the methodological aspects of this research have also been productive. The reliance on water screening appears to have produced a larger than anticipated faunal collection (although, as previously discussed we must still work to verify that the remains

are from the prehistoric occupation). We seem to gathering more evidence that shell middens, if they are to be productive, must receive much more detailed study. Previous efforts that focus solely on ¼-inch dry screening or, even worse, stripping without formal excavation, cannot be expected to provide meaningful subsistence data.

38CH1477

This site was compromised first by the early twentieth century construction of a pond, and more recently by the placement of a construction staging area. In spite of these problems, the close interval testing proved its value by clearly identifying a concentration of artifacts.

Our research goals at this site focused on a single theme, further examining the lives of slaves belonging to a small plantation owner. Our discussions have emphasized that much of what we know about both master and slave come from larger, more wealthy, and more profitable plantations. Relatively little research has been conducted at the small plantations (which, of course, comprise the vast majority of South Carolina holdings). This research is made even more valuable by virtue of having for comparison the plantation settlement of the plantation's owner during the eighteenth century.

Consequently, we have the ability to not only focus on comparisons between slave sites, but also between the slaves and master of the same plantation.

Our excavations did not reveal clear evidence of architectural remains, but before going into the research we speculated that any architecture would be ephemeral. What we did encounter were relatively well defined clusters of both nails and brick — both pointing to a structure location. They also suggest a nineteenth century "type" of structure: probably framed, probably set on low brick piers, and almost certainly without glazing. In other words, we did not recover any indication of wall trench construction techniques at this site.

This structure stands in contrast to that found at 38CH1466, where not only a wall trench building was identified, most likely with two rooms, but also a building that used a very low-grade mortar instead of (or in addition to) the traditional clay daub. These differences may be temporal, but at the present time we don't see a great deal of difference in the ceramics from the two areas, so we wonder if the difference may be functional. If there is no significant temporal difference, then this plantation may document the co-existence of the two building techniques, leading to the speculation that perhaps at the small, poorer plantations there was considerable conservativism and old building techniques, perhaps because of their low cost, continued to be used well into the nineteenth century.

Our research at 38CH1477 provides good data on the material culture associated with the occupants of this structure. The recovered assemblage includes a broad range of kitchen materials, primarily ceramics and container glass; a spartan assortment of architectural remains, primarily nails with perhaps only one pentle; and a sparse assortment of personal and clothing items, most commonly buttons and beads.

Of tremendous interest is the faunal assemblage, which appears relatively large considering the low incidence of shell and the acidity of the soil. This assemblage is anticipated to provide useful information on the diet of the slaves at a small plantation and will serve as an interesting comparison to the main plantation house, previously examined.

Status of Processing

The collections have been washed. Those from 38CH1477 have been sorted. Within the next several months we anticipate completing the sorting of collections of 38CH1466 and beginning the cataloging and analysis of the assemblage. Within the next several weeks we also anticipate drying the flotation samples and then floating them.

At the present time we do not have material suitable for radiocarbon dating from the prehistoric site. While the flotation of soil samples may provide such materials, we must still wait to determine their context and if they are likely to yield valid dates.

More significant are the faunal samples, which

we are hoping to sort out within the next month or so, allowing analysis to begin fairly quickly.

No clam shell samples suitable for seasonal dating were identified in the assemblage. Although clam was a component of several features we did not find sufficient materials intact lips.

We may submit soil samples for pollen and phytolith analysis from the midden at 38CH1466, although this, too, is pending a more thorough analysis of the collection. If there is extensive mixing of historic and prehistoric materials we would have the same problem interpreting these results as we will with the results of the faunal study.

SOURCES CITED

Adams, Natalie and Michael Trinkley

1993 *Archaeological Survey of the Seaside Farms Tract, Charleston County, South Carolina*. Research Series 35. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.

McMakin, Todd, Tina Rust, and Eric C. Poplin

1997 *Archaeological Data Recovery at 38CH1563, Franke Home Tract, Seaside Farms, Charleston County, South Carolina*. Brockington and Associates, Atlanta.

Trinkley, Michael, editor

1986 *Indian and Freedmen Occupation at the Fish Hall Site (38BU805), Beaufort County, South Carolina*. Research Series 7. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.

Trinkley, Michael and Debi Hacker

1996 *"With Credit and Honour:" Archaeological Investigations at the Plantation of John Whitesides, A Small Planter of Christ Church Parish, Charleston County, South Carolina*. Research Series 48. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.

Trinkley, Michael, Missy Trushel, and David R. Lawrence

1995 *Archaeological Data Recovery Excavations at 38CH1219, Kiawah Island: "Another" Deptford and St. Catherines Shell Midden*. Research Contribution 180. Chicora Foundation, Inc., Columbia.